DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 044 250 RE 003 031

AUTHOR Pridgen, Ennie M.; And Others
TITLE Progress for Middle-Graders Among the Educationally Disadvantaged Through Photography.
PUB DATE May 70
NOTE 12p.; Paper presented at the International Reading Association conference, Anaheim, Cal., May 6-9, 1970

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.70
DESCRIPTORS *Grade 5, Instructional Materials, Intermediate Grades, *Photography, Reading Difficulty, *Reading Instruction, Reading Materials, Reading Research, Remedial Reading, *Student Developed Materials, *Visual Learning

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to assess the feasability of teaching fifth graders to read through instruction in photography and the use of such student-produced materials as pictures, books, magazines, and charts. The 60 subjects, all of whom were experiencing severe reading disability, were divided into two classes of 30 students each. Both classes were given Dolch's 220 Basic Word Recognition Inventory, and then equivalent mean scores were obtained. The students were split into control and experimental groups, the control group receiving conventional remedial instruction and the experimental group using the photography approach. After 4 weeks, the Dolch test was readministered. Results showed that the mean gain score was significantly higher for the experimental group. References are included. (NH)

ED 044250

TITLE: "Progress for Middle-Graders Among the Educationally Disadvantaged Through Photography

Investigators: Ennie M. Pridgen, Assistant Professor of Education--Director of Reading; Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, North Carolina, and Renée Westcott, Curriculum/Media Specialist; North Carolina State Commission on Higher Education Facilities, Raleigh, North Carolina.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

RE 003 031

Title: Progress for Middle-Graders Among the Educationally Disadvantaged Through Photography.

Investigators: Ennie M. Pridgen, Assistant Professor of Reading, Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, North Carolina

and

Renee Westcott, Curriculum/Media Specialist, North Carolina State Commission on Higher Education Facilities, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Purpose: To assess the feasibility of teaching middle-grade (specifically fifth grade) students to read through the use of photography and student-produced materials--picture taking; compiling magazines, books, constructing charts.

Sequence of Steps Taken: Relevant literature was fully explored; schools were contacted to locate 60 students in two randomly selected intact classes of thirty who were experiencing severe reading disabilities; both classes were given Dolch's 220 Basic Word Recognition Inventory. An equivalent mean score was obtained. The control group received "conventional" instruction, while the experimental group received the treatment--instruction utilizing photography. Learning time was controlled by rendering equal instruction. An observation procedure was used to make the assessment of differences in instructional events possible. At the end of a four-week period, the Dolch's inventory was readministered to both groups. An analyses of mean gain scores for the two groups was used to determine the relative effectiveness of the two methods. The mean gain score was significant at the .05 level of confidence.

PROGRESS FOR MIDDLE-GRADERS THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY

Each year we read about needed impetus for the deliberation of new and/or different methodology or the probable refinements of previously developed procedures aimed at the elimination of severe reading deficiencies found among the educationally disadvantaged.

Although prototypes of success are developing, generally, due to the intense efforts, thoughts, and considerations of many, there is an ever increasing need to focus human and material resources on specific problems so that the techniques and procedures proven successful can be clearly defined and utilized, though modified to meet existing needs, by others.

One such specific problem is the number of severe reading disabilities found at the middle-grade level. It is at this level that more research is needed. It is at this level that the child so handicapped often becomes frustrated and welcomes the day when he can divorce himself from all semblances of irrelevancy and failure in academic achievement. Havighurst describes the results of such frustration:

> This frustration begins to be felt keenly by the fifth or sixth grade, when teachers begin to grade pupils more realistically. The frustration culminates in the junior high school, when all the boys and girls from all the elementary schools come together. Here the competition for school grades becomes keener. The child becomes a potential or a real drop-out. [3]

Reading is the key to the vast knowledge that daily accumulates at an enormous rate. As one of the means of communication, reading uses words in the exchange of ideas. It shares a concern for word meanings with other

means of communication, and unique to itself is the problem of word recognition. Over-emphasis on word recognition may ultimately result in readers who are "word-callers" and "low comprehenders," however, neglect in this area usually assures students who are severely handicapped. Reading programs then must recognize the importance of both word form mastery and meaningful reading. The initial task is for students to build a sight vocabulary out of which they can develop skill in other diverse recognition and analysis techniques.

The student with difficulty in word recognition profits from the discovery and the effective use of successful approaches to words. Aaron advances the theory that:

> Being able to attack unknown words is mandatory for reading. Word analysis skills will not guarantee success in reading, but inability to recognize words will guarantee poor reading or the inability to read. These important skills are means to the ends of comprehension, interpretation, and appreciation.[1]

Academic failure in reading has been associated with the concept the child has of himself. A sense of personal involvement and the need to experience success are deemed particularly important for children to build positive images of themselves as successful learners.

Levy defends the use of photographs in the classroom when she says that, "The taking and displaying of photographs has an amazing effect. This creates relevancy to their school work and contributes greatly toward reading activities." She says that the use of photography plus any and all other ways that can be used to help children feel that "where they are"--their problems and interests--is acceptable and relevant to their school work. They are then ready to learn to read.[4]

Duncan and Parker succinctly verify that photographs serve special education needs of students with limited reading ability. They add that pictures show ways of life, human activity in its natural setting and give meaning to words thereby providing relevancy for children.[2]

Children differ in educationally significant ways and each individual has unique characteristics which are relevant to learning methods. In this study, photography was employed in order to involve the learner in the highly individual matter of beginning to read.

Thomas and Swartout are convinced that sometimes the typical textbook is too difficult for pupils. To facilitate reading, teachers and students often create their own reading materials to (a) meet the needs that are not met by available reading sources; (b) give students experience in collecting information; and (c) enable students to share with others.[5]

Veatch offers encouragement for using student-produced materials when she says that the child as an author is more likely to become the child as a reader, more easily, more rapidly, and with greater appreciation than if writing is not so used.[6]

This study proposed to assess the feasibility of teaching students with severe reading disabilities at the fifth grade class level to read through the use of photography and pupil-made materials.

Method Used

1. Comparable groups (thirty in each) in reading aptitude and general intelligence abilities were randomly selected from a larger population

of cases handicapped by severe reading deficiencies previously stratified by the reading specialist.

2. Dolch's 220 Basic Sight Word Inventory was administered to both groups. Equivalent mean scores were obtained.
3. The control group was instructed in the "conventional" way.
4. A college-student observer and an observational procedure were used that revealed differences in instructional events between the two groups.
5. The experimental group used photography and created the materials used for reading.
6. Both groups received equal instruction time in reading.
7. Differences in mean gain scores were analyzed at the end of four weeks, utilizing the Dolch's Basic Sight Word Inventory.

Since the program utilized college-student assistants in all classes, the observer did not present a variant factor.

The Control Group

The control group, consisting of 12 girls and 18 boys, was exposed to the two-group plan. The instructor grouped them according to the number of words known as indicated by the inventory.

One group was composed of 16 students and included all who were able to recognize from 36 to 45 words correctly. These were then exposed to the entire vocabulary by way of picture-word cards, teacher mounted and commercially prepared materials. Experience stories were widely used. The other group, consisting of 14 students who recognized fewer words, were limited to 100 words for the four week period. The activities and materials were identical

to those of the other group with the exception of a teacher-made game. The pace for these, however, was slower.

The Experimental Group

The experimental group of 11 girls and 19 boys was given cameras and film. These materials were explored, and the children quickly acquired skill in using them. The cameras and film were taken home each day during the instructional period. The children were not formally grouped. Temporary groups were formed for objectives such as compiling magazines or newspapers They used the pictures for books, charts, stories and oral presentations. Skill was gained in sequencing and visual literacy as well as in word recognition.

Findings, Scores, Analyses

As is evidenced in Table I, both groups had severe reading disabilities.

TABLE I

MEAN NUMBER OF SIGHT WORDS RECOGNIZED
ON PRETESTS OF EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

Groups	Cases	Mean
Control	30	35.167
Experimental	30	35.067

Table I shows that the mean score for the 30 cases in the control group was 35.167. The 30 cases in the experimental group scored a mean of 35.067. There was no significant difference (t = .04241). No child was able

to recognize more than 45 words by sight.

At the completion of the posttests, mean gain scores were compared to determine the significance level of the method used, if any. The results are found in Table II.

TABLE II

MEAN GAIN SCORES IN THE NUMBER OF SIGHT WORDS RECOGNIZED ON POSTTESTS OF EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

Groups	Cases	Mean	Gain
Control	30	76.333	41.161
Experimental	30	114.167	79.1

The data in Table II show that the mean gain score for the control group was 41.161. The experimental group exceeded the mean gain of the control group by 37.939. A comparison of the mean gain scores for both groups revealed that the difference is significant at the .05 level of confidence ($t = 2.80$) in favor of the experimental group.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Significantly greater gains in sight word recognition were achieved in the study by educationally disadvantaged children through the use of photography and pupil-made materials than through the use of methods involving "conventional" techniques. This method created interest, introduced problems, stimulated thinking, clarified and amplified concepts, provoked discussion and proved a vehicle for more positive self-concepts.

This study indicates advantages in getting the educationally disadvantaged student involved. He needs to relate his world to his schoolwork. He needs to talk about himself, his interests and activities. He must become keenly aware of the "self," of its importance to oneself as well as to others. He must grow not by comparison with others, but with himself and, in addition, he must respect each individual for himself.

In order to provoke modification, to lengthen the time involved and to further verify the data here, a longitudinal study will begin shortly. This will provide opportunities to note the degree of extinction, if any, and to follow the students into more advanced skills of reading.

The results obtained from this and the subsequent study may well be a breakthrough in the efforts to help pupils with severe reading disabilities to make more rapid progress in reading.

REFERENCES

1. Aaron, Ira E., "In-Service Help on Word Analysis Techniques," The Reading Teacher, (March, 1966), pp. 410-413.

2. Duncan, Marvin E. and James E. Parker, Student-Made and Teacher-Made Pictures, Michigan: Edward Brothers, Incorporated, 1964, pp. 1-2.

3. Havighurst, Robert J., Growing Up in River City, New York: John Wiley and Sons, Incorporated, 1962, p. 72.

4. Levy, Betty, Harvard Graduate School of Education Association Bulletin, Massachusetts: Harvard Press, 1965, No. 2, p. 432.

5. Thomas, Murray and Sherwin Swartout, "Taking Photographs," Integrated Teaching Materials, New York: David McKay Company, Incorporated, 1963, pp. 205-250.

6. Veatch, Jeannette, Reading in the Elementary School, New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1966, p. 295.

"Ann and the Pictures"

A book by Ann
Johnson C. Smith School
University

My mother came for me. I was scared she would break the camera. She took the boys and the girls waiting for the mother to pick up.
My hand is in mouth cause I am scared.